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*The Delius Society
Journal*

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The Delius Society

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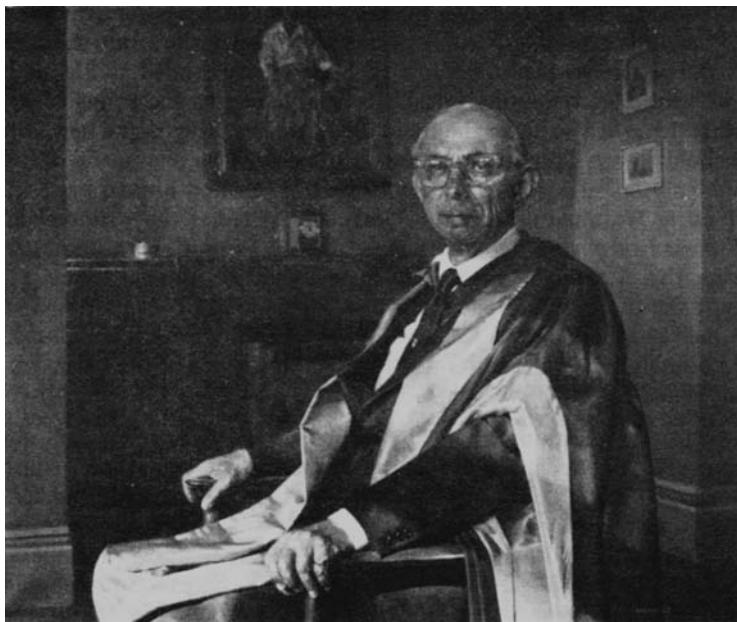
Cover Illustration

An early sketch of Delius by Edvard Munch
reproduced by kind permission of the Curator
of the Munch Museum, Oslo, Norway,

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Editorial

One way or another presidents have recently been much in the news. And while our President might not be able to sport any Hollywood background (though he has tenuous links with the film world through the music he wrote for Sir Alfred Hitchcock's 1939 *Jamaica Inn*) he has had his share of publicity in recent months. On October 3rd at the University of Bradford, of which he is an Honorary Graduate, he unveiled a portrait of himself painted by a local artist, Mr Kenneth Jackson, and commissioned by the University. Before the unveiling ceremony there was a showing of Ken Russell's incomparable film *Song of Summer* and, besides Professor and Mrs Fenby, the guests at the reception included Dr Lionel Carley, Mr and Mrs Russell, and Philip Jones, a former Fellow in Music at Bradford University and now Lecturer in Music at Keele University and a Society member very active in the promotion of Delius. We are most grateful to Professor J C West, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Bradford University, for allowing us to reproduce the portrait within our pages.



In the pre and post concert publicity that surrounded Julian Lloyd Webber's Wigmore Hall recital on November 19th, Dr Fenby was to be heard or seen on

BBC Radio 4 and 2 and BBC2. Indeed, the Delius Society positively invaded Radio 2 on the night of November 18th when Brian Matthew's *Round Midnight* Arts programme included interviews with Eric Fenby and Julian Lloyd Webber, also by chance with our member Plantagenet Somerset Fry (though not on the subject of Delius), as well as playing a recording of the highly-acclaimed British-born jazz pianist George Shearing (a subject of the recent BBCTV *Best of British* series) whom we are pleased to welcome to our Society. Ken Russell's film was mentioned in the course of the programme and, asked about the portrayal of Delius, Eric Fenby replied that it was 'wonderful . . . Max Adrian was exactly as I remembered Delius . . . I coached him in the kind of inflection of Delius's voice and the way he sat, the way he held his hands, and of course what really I think was the most remarkable piece of acting in that very remarkable film – to my mind – was the speed of the dictation, because I had given them various samples from my book *Delius as I knew him* of how it went, but I didn't think it would be possible for them to do it so remarkably because Delius dictated with the very greatest rapidity . . .'

He also spoke of the genesis of the *Idyll* out of *Margot La Rouge* (itself discussed in detail in this issue in the concluding part of David Eccott's examination of the opera). Delius, he said, had never been very happy about the libretto of *Margot* and asked Robert Nichols if he would produce another one. Nichols happened to be very busy at the time, and when Fenby came over from Grez to visit him at Winchelsea, Nichols had said, 'Well, I really can't think that we can do this job now, but you can't go back empty-handed to Delius', so he suggested extracting the more lyrical bits from the opera and trying to do something with them and so form the basis for a work, adding that a new libretto if needed could always be written at some future date. Two uneventful days passed until suddenly 'in an absolute downpour of rain' Nichols arrived back with the idea of using Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, in particular the passage beginning '*Once I passed through a populous city*'. 'And so I fished about in the score for something that I thought might give some indication of that mood . . . and found just the place . . .' Gradually in this way a kind of scenario was built up which could be taken back to Delius who was 'delighted with it and immediately dictated entirely new voice parts to fit in to the texture of the music which we had maintained'.

In answer to one question, Eric Fenby helped lay the ghost of Delius's supposed indifference to the technicalities of performance. He said that Delius was a mystic who, by living the life of a recluse, went for months without hearing the orchestra. Consequently when he did hear it he was carried away by the sheer beauty of its sound and hardly in the emotional state to answer technical points immediately at rehearsal. The point was made by Eugene Goossen's observation back in 1923. At the very first rehearsals for the production of *Hassan* Delius had been absolutely helpless when it came to giving advice. But as the rehearsals proceeded he became most difficult and began pointing out technical details which quite alarmed everyone.

Six days after the recital, Dr Fenby and Julian Lloyd Webber appeared together on Russell Harty's BBC2 programme. Apart from some bad programme planning with a misplaced interview with an American writer, the whole programme

centred on Delius. From Bradford the new Fenby portrait and the Gunn Delius (which can be also seen in the background of Kenneth Jackson's painting) were on display, two brief extracts from Ken Russell's film were potent reminders of its extraordinarily moving impact (why has it not been televised again since 1973?), and Kate Bush came on in person and in celluloid (or more probably videotape) to enact her very individual song and film sequence *Delius (a song of summer)*. She spoke of her introduction to Delius as having been through the Russell film. One wonders what effect a reshowing would have today on those who have never seen it. It is surely this sort of material for which the video cassette should be used, either on a commercial basis to the general public or on loan at a reasonable charge to societies and institutions.

Julian Lloyd Webber's recital on November 19th was given to a packed Wigmore Hall. John Ireland's fine cello sonata made an excellent foil to the Delius which was given an eloquent reading, the honours being equally divided between soloist and Dr Fenby's splendid accompaniment. The emotional tenor of the performance seemed to be directed towards the work's *lento, molto tranquillo* middle section where the heart-felt musings gave way only with some reluctance to the return of the opening theme. Coincidentally the previous evening it was the absence of the cello which had provided the centre of interest in the Tertis arrangement of Delius's Double Concerto. Leslie Head's overall grasp of the work could hardly have been bettered with his well-judged tempi, and he was given able support by the Kensington Symphony Orchestra. The balance between soloists and orchestra was perhaps not ideal, but this may have been peculiar to the position of one's seat in St John's, Smith Square. In many respects the Delius Concerto is better suited than Elgar's Cello Concerto to Tertis's treatment for in the Elgar the respective compasses of the instruments necessitate some awkward leaps in the familiar melodic line when played on the viola. But in either version the Delius concerto is surely due for a reassessment. A stronger work than his Cello Concerto, this performance provided a welcome reminder of the poignant beauties of the middle section and, in its closing pages, of a mood reminiscent of the *Requiem* composed the previous year (though not, as stated in the notes to ASD 3343, sharing a similar dedication).

The Delius items in the Royal Philharmonic Society's concert on December 10th sadly fell short of expectations. Much as one may admire Ida Haendel's interpretations of the Elgar, Walton and Britten violin concertos, her first encounter with the Delius concerto yielded an approach that was inclined to be aggressive at the expense of the more poetic insight to which one is accustomed in this work. Her superb technique did however enable her to manage comfortably the 12/8 *allegretto* section at an unusually quick tempo. Rather than scaling the heights, Rozhdestvensky's view of *The Song of the High Hills* tended to flatten the contours. Nevertheless there was much to admire in this performance, especially the chorus's outstanding contribution which in the broadcast was perfectly balanced with splendid 'distancing' effect. One could have wished for stronger accentuation on the violins' first beat at the very opening and elsewhere, for the phrasing robbed that theme of much of its freshness and vigour. Similarly the magical timpani entries on the last page needed marking up. Over the air they went for nothing. This and the unaccom-

panied choral entry are great moments, not just in Delius but in all music. It was also noted in this performance that three soprano soloists were used instead of one at the work's choral climax. Let us hope that Rozhdestvensky, always an interesting conductor, with his inclinations toward British music will return to this work and give us more Delius, even *A Mass of Life* which he had planned but was unable to give us ten years ago.

The Zurich production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* has received glowing reports in the English and Continental press, and it is hoped to give a full account of this and the Darmstadt productions in the next issue of the Journal. More unusual Delian activity on the Continent has been the recording for Norwegian television on January 6th – 10th of Delius's melodrama *Paa Vidderne* (RT III/I, not to be confused with the purely orchestral symphonic poem VI/IO now available on record in World Records SHB54). The recording took place in the NRK studios, Ibsen's poem was declaimed by a leading Norwegian actor in its original language and not in the German translation of the manuscript, and the NRK Orchestra was conducted by Charles Farncombe who is presently associated with the Norwegian Opera. Our member Andrew Boyle (who is to address the Society later this year and who has supplied this information) helped in his official capacity as musical advisor by preparing a piano reduction and a performing edition of the full score. At present the recording awaits marriage to its visual complement – seasonal shots of Norwegian scenery – and is not due to be broadcast for a few months yet. In charge of production is Gunnar Rugstad, the author of a recent study of Sinding. He it was who unearthed the programme for the first performance of the 'other' *Paa Vidderne* in the archives of the Institute of Musicology in Oslo.

Quite the most exciting news of the year has been a recording project to be undertaken by Unicorn Records entitled 'The Fenby Legacy'. This is expected to be a two-record set mostly consisting of the works Eric Fenby took down from Delius's dictation and to be conducted by him. These are: *Songs of Farewell*, *Fantastic Dance*, *Song of Summer*, *Idyll*, *Cynara*, *A Late Lark*, *Irmelin Prelude*, *Caprice and Elegy*, and *Two Aquarelles*. The first three works are due to have been recorded on February 10th and 11th at Watford Town Hall with the Ambrosian Singers and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The original idea came from Christopher Palmer, the producer of these recordings, whose study of the composer, *Delius – Portrait of a Cosmopolitan*, members will be well acquainted with. The set is planned for release this autumn in a folder, possibly together with Faber and Faber's paper-back re-issue of Fenby's *Delius as I knew him*. In addition to this, Unicorn Records have also recorded on January 12th the Cello Sonata with Julian Lloyd Webber, and Eric Fenby playing Delius's Ibach piano as he did on the Unicorn recording of the three violin sonatas with Ralph Holmes in 1972. With the record industry passing through a difficult period it is hoped that all members will give this enterprise their fullest support.

The Delius items in the *English Songs* two-record set on OUP 155-6 (mentioned in the previous Journal) are, as there translated, *The Homeward Way*, *Twilight Fancies*, *Young Venevil*, *Hidden Love*, *The Bird's Story* (numbers 2, 3, 4, 6 & 7 of *Seven Songs from the Norwegian*) and *The Nightingale* (the second of *Five*

Songs from the Norwegian). A critical eye will notice some unfortunate inaccuracies in the accompanying sleeve notes. A new recording of the String Quartet is a welcome gap-filler in the catalogue. Together with the Sibelius quartet, it is performed by the Fitzwilliam Quartet on L'Oiseau-Lyre DSL047. A single Delius item, the *Serenade* from *Hassan* (for violin, harp and strings) played by the Cleveland Sinfonietta under Louis Lane, is to be found in a mid-price collection on CBS61433.

Some recordings not generally available in Britain through the normal channels deserve a mention here. Two 'live' performances by Benno Moiseiwitsch, one of the Delius Piano Concerto in 1955 and the other of the 'Emperor' Concerto in 1963 (his last public appearance), both conducted by Sargent, appear on record number 725 obtainable from Discocorp, PO Box 771, Berkeley, California 94701, USA for about eight dollars. (Moiseiwitsch's commercial recording of the Delius concerto, conducted by Constant Lambert, is available on World Records SH224.) A single cassette containing performances of Delius's three violin sonatas and the cello sonata has for a while been available from the Classical Cassette Company (formerly Club) of New Jersey. The artists are Derry Deane (violin) with Eleanor Hancock (piano) and Alexander Kouguell (cello) with David Hancock (piano), the cassette number BP57. The violin sonatas with the same performers (and presumably the same performances) reappear on a disc, Superba SA2037, issued by Sine Qua Non Production, 25 Mill Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02904, USA. The possibility of obtaining a number of copies at a very reasonable price is being investigated by the Society and should the venture prove worthwhile members will be informed. The second sonata is also found on a direct-to-tape recording entitled *Violin Rarities* played by our American member Davyd Booth (violin) and Andrew Willis. The catalogue number is DTR-7912 and the recording is obtainable in a variety of formats from open reel (4 or 2 track version, dolby encoded or otherwise) to cassette and eight-track cartridge, from Direct-to-Tape Recording Co., 14 Station Avenue, Haddon Heights, New Jersey 08035, a company for which our American member Bill Marsh is the artist and repertoire co-ordinator on the classical side. The cost of the release is in the region of eleven dollars and other items are by Martinu, Reger and Vieuxtemps.

Of peripheral Delian interest are two historical releases. The first, on World Records RTRM501, is of Frederic Austin's arrangement of *The Beggar's Opera*. Austin was the soloist with Henry Wood and Beecham in the early performances of *Sea Drift* in this country in 1908 and 1909. These 1920 and 1922 recordings testify to Austin's diverse skills as composer and arranger, singer and conductor. He was the father of Richard Austin who ably assisted Beecham in the 1946 Delius Festival. The other recording is of senior vintage, from 1908. The peculiar interest in this ancient D'Oyly Carte *Mikado* on Pearl GEMM 198 lies in two of the singers, Harry Dearth and Walter Hyde, who two years later were Manz and Sali in Beecham's first British production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* at Covent Garden.

Finally a note of apology for the late arrival of this issue. This was due to circumstances beyond the editor's and the printer's control: the very late arrival of the music examples for David Eccott's article which were being set up by an outside source.

MARGOT LA ROUGE

by David Eccott

Part Two: The Music

In dealing with the music of *Margot La Rouge* my main objective will be to examine the thematic construction of the opera. I shall use music examples to illustrate the text and some of these will incorporate passages which were not used in the *Idyll*. Also, from time to time I shall remark upon the difficulties involved in reconstructing the instrumentation from Ravel's vocal score.¹ The scores referred to are the Boosey & Hawkes study score of the *Idyll* and the lithographed vocal score of *Margot La Rouge*.

The prelude to the opera is exactly the same as the prelude used for the *Idyll*. A pianissimo A major chord suspended over a syncopated and throbbing tonic pedal opens the work. Then in the second bar a floating theme is heard on the cor anglais.

Example 1



This theme weaves its way through virtually the whole of the sixty-five bars of the prelude, all the while becoming more intense and reaching a passionate climax before finally subsiding. Strangely enough it is not this melody, beautiful and nostalgic though it is in its simplicity, that is to assume any significance in the opera itself. In fact, apart from a brief interlude between Scenes 1 & 2 and another short appearance in Scene 3, that is all we hear of it. Instead it is a little melodic fragment that makes an almost shy and seemingly insignificant entry some twenty bars into the prelude which is destined to become a figure of major importance.

Example 2



The prelude runs *segue* into Scene 1 where we immediately encounter another important theme.

Andante maestoso

Example 3

It was not Delius's first intention to use the operatic prelude as a preamble to the *Idyll*. His original plan was to use the above extract with its ensuing bars as an introduction to the first baritone entry. These bars were later cut from the *Idyll* when it was decided that the original prelude would prove to be a better

medium for evoking the exact mood of the work. However, Eric Fenby's orchestral manuscript for this section still survives and, as it is a precise duplication of Delius's original scoring, it makes an interesting comparison with Ravel's piano arrangement. For instance, the octaves in the treble (bar 3 of Example 3) do not appear in the orchestration! In fact only the bottom notes of the octave passage appear and they are played on flute! How typically Delian, but how many would-be orchestrators — unless equipped with a thorough working knowledge of Delius's orchestral devices — would have orchestrated correctly? It can only be assumed that Ravel's reason for writing octaves when there aren't any was to try to adapt the score in compliance with the sonorities of the keyboard, but it has proved, along with many other instances, to be very misleading for us under our present circumstances.

The melody quoted in Example 3 dominates almost the whole of Scene 1 and works towards a small climax with the squabble of the two women (see the libretto synopsis in Part One). A calm statement of it in the basses closes the scene.

Scene 2 is mostly taken up with a delightful aria for Lili, the music for which can be found in its entirety in the *Idyll* (the twenty-eight bars beginning at Figure 3 in the study score). Contained in the accompaniment to this aria are two important melodic germs.

Example 4

A musical score for a bassoon part. The score consists of two staves. The top staff shows a continuous line of eighth-note chords. The bottom staff shows a single melodic line. Two brackets are drawn over the music: bracket 'A' covers the first six measures of the top staff, and bracket 'B' covers the last three measures of the bottom staff.

A brief quasi-recitative over low tremolandi chords ends this section and also prepares the way for the 'rain' music. It seems to me here that Delius may have fallen back on the techniques used in the storm music in Act One of *The Magic Fountain*. Although in *Margot* the music depicts a heavy spring downpour rather than a violent sea-storm, there are some striking similarities, especially with the 'lightning-like' effect of 'shot' chords and cascading chromatic scales.

When in Scene 3 the jovialities in the café resume, Delius now develops the earlier material shown in Example 3.

Example 5

A musical score for a piano or harp part. The score consists of two staves. The top staff features a rhythmic pattern of eighth-note chords with '3' above them, indicating triplets. The bottom staff shows a continuous line of eighth-note chords. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

The dance rhythm soon dominates the music and assumes a 12/8 character. At the climax we encounter music very similar in style to that used in the earlier tone-poem *Paris*.

Example 6

All is suddenly calmed as Margot herself enters. She does not speak but her almost magnetic attraction is strongly underlined in the orchestra by the appearance of her leitmotiv.

Example 7

Margot's leitmotiv is of course the little theme of Example 2 which in the prelude led us to believe it was merely serving as a bridge passage only. Because of the skilful way it is incorporated into the musical canvas it attains a haunting quality that makes one wonder where one has heard it before. It is also the only motif in the whole opera which can be said to connect with one of the personalities involved. After this serene interruption of the merriments, the dance rhythms take off again. There is a little reworking of material from the opening scenes, but soon the excitement expires and quiet mysterious chords usher in the soldiers. At the point in Scene 4 when the soldiers' attention is drawn towards Margot, another motif appears that is to become connected with Thibault's tender reflections on his past love.

Example 8

Later, when in Scene 5 the above example assumes its full manifestation, the derivation from bracket A in Example 4 is clearly visible.

Example 92

However, let us remain with Scene 4 for the moment. Two more important themes now emerge. The first (Example 10) has its roots in bracket B of Example 4 and both are used quite substantially during the oncoming scenes.

Example 10³

Example 11



Another melody, simply constructed from a first inversion major arpeggio is also heard solely (but very predominantly) in Scene 4. Gently underlining Thibault's deepening fascination with Margot, it makes six appearances in all and each time with a different harmonisation. Four of these versions are used in the *Idyll* but one that is not – and certainly none-the-less sumptuous for that reason – is the following.

Example 12



When Thibault learns the name of the girl whom he has been watching, Margot's leitmotiv is played again but now in a slight rhythmic variant. As a finale to the scene a burlesque imitation of military fanfares signals the soldiers' exit.

The dialogue between Margot and Thibault in Scene 5 mainly utilises the music from Examples 10 and 11 – both now undergoing slight development. New material is however introduced as the emotions of the two main characters become more intense.

Example 13⁴

A passionate outburst of the Margot motif is stated as she discloses to Thibault the fact that, since their estrangement, she has found another 'amour'. The theme shatters into a descending arpeggio as if to betoken Thibault's heart-felt defeat. But Margot cannot hide her true love for Thibault and, as the latter sings triumphantly to the music of Example 9 which is now perpetuated with renewed rapture, the love scene proper begins. In a masterful stretto, music from Examples 2, 10, 11 and 13 is brought together to produce one of the composer's most enraptured love duets. The Margot motif in particular undergoes stringent development and carries the music to an elevated climax. As the passion subsides a version of the triplet figure (from Example 4 bracket B) is played in fourths above the now long-absent music from the very opening of Scene 1.⁵

The sweetness is broken as Scene 7 begins and the artist appears.

Example 14



From this point onwards the music takes on a harsh, moody and dissonant nature – totally unprecedented and quite unlike anything that has gone before. Low thick tremolandi, dark harmonies and ‘shot’ chords strongly enforce the impending violence to be witnessed on stage. The following extract is typical.

Example 15



This type of writing is definitely *not* Delius as we know him. However, in spite of this, we should not be completely unfamiliar with the anonymous *verismo* style thus encountered. In *A Village Romeo and Juliet* we find Delius writing in a very similar mould at the end of Scenes 1 and 3 of that opera, although in *Margot* the effect is much more prolonged. Even so, Scene 7 of *Margot La Rouge* is somewhat unique in Delian literature and it will indeed need a performance of the work to tell whether the composer can sustain the interest of an audience with this style of writing for a whole 186 bars!

For the main part none of the motifs from the earlier scenes is used and the music is strikingly ‘theme-less’. Even when references are made they now take on a very terse astringent quality. Only at the death of the artist do we feel we are on familiar territory with the infamous triplet figure being hammered out in a full orchestral tutti.

Example 16

This outburst is followed by more subdued bars and then, over an expressive lament of her leitmotiv, Margot sings her final, almost distracted, phrases. As she is led away by the Gendarmerie the Margot motif swells to a fortissimo and with this – its final statement now in the bass and apropos of the heavy brass – the opera is brought to a resounding close.

Example 17



We have now studied the history of the opera, we are familiar with the libretto and have more than a nodding acquaintance with the music. If nothing else I hope I have shown that *Margot La Rouge* has been dismissed rather unfairly in the past. Of course, one must not be too hard on previous commentators and their criticisms of the work. At the time of their writings there were far more important aspects of Delius's output to be dealt with. Today, however, all of the composer's major compositions have received fine live performances and have been recorded. Excellent research has been done concerning the life and times of Delius, so we now have a greater understanding of both the man and his music. In view of this I should like to make a few observations upon the opera that are possibly in its favour.

If the reader will recall the libretto synopsis in Part One of this essay, one fact should be immediately apparent: the libretto is of a contemporary nature. It is a love story set in modern times. The characters do not exist in a fairy tale, neither are they manipulated by unseen forces but secure their own fate by their own actions. *Margot La Rouge* may not possess the finest libretto ever written but Delius, in his most inspired pages, has made it a vehicle for some really lovely music. The middle scenes have an immediate surface appeal, and sandwiched between the parlando-recitative style of the opening scenes and the angry writing of the final scene, they are thrown into even greater relief. In the above musical extracts I have purposely refrained from including the vocal lines. This is because the narrative of the opera is very much 'in the orchester' – another typically Delian procedure.⁶ Finally, when one considers that a work such as the piano concerto – not regarded as vintage Delius – has been given due recognition and enjoyed by many, and also the early opera *The Magic Fountain* which has been successful both in and out of the Delius camp, then there should be no reason why *Margot La Rouge* should not aspire to the same levels.

All in all the time is now ripe for a performance of *Margot La Rouge*, and we are indeed fortunate that Eric Fenby has reconstructed the orchestration. It is thought that the original orchestration of *Margot* was the same as that which is used in the *Idyll*.⁷ This seems most likely as there is no apparent call for triple woodwind or an enlarged brass section, and also when working on the *Idyll* both Delius and Fenby had a big enough job on their hands without adding to or subtracting from the original orchestration. It is an easy enough task to transplant the orchestration of the *Idyll* into the corresponding pages of *Margot*, but this still leaves a lot of music where there is only Ravel's piano score to go by. With Delius's orchestration the instrumental colouring is extremely important and it is most desirable to achieve a perfect balance in order that the essential timbre will penetrate the texture. With the original full-score still refusing to reveal its whereabouts we need someone who could literally 'out-Delius Delius' in tackling such a reconstruction. For instance, consider the following:

Example 18



The A major chord in bar 1 could be orchestrated for strings with a solo woodwind instrument (possibly a clarinet or low flute) supplying the melody. Another woodwind instrument (bassoon?) might play the melody beginning at the end of this bar and continuing into the following bar under first and second violins. We could score the A, C sharp and F octaves for pizzicato cellos and basses. At the end of bar 3 a change of colour would be desirable; we could give the melody to the cor anglais and orchestrate the accompanying chords for other woodwind instruments, but the problem would be getting the correct combination for the desired effect. Mr Fenby is probably more knowledgeable of Delius's techniques than any other living person and would thus be able to find the key for an accurate mixture and voicing of woodwind and horns or strings and woodwind, etc. This is also very true of the crucial orchestral effects required for Scene 7. When one is confronted with the music for this scene as it appears in piano form, one can quite understand some of Delius's biographers stating that the music which was not incorporated into the *Idyll* has little merit. Regarding this we should heed Delius's own warning to John Coates – 'My music does not sound well on piano . . . but it will be very effective when played'. These words are particularly relevant to the final scene where an efficacious orchestral dressing is essential. As if this were not enough, there are numerous discrepancies between the score of the *Idyll* and the vocal score of *Margot* and it needs an Eric Fenby to unravel these mysteries!

I have always believed that music should be played rather than talked about, and I sincerely hope that this will soon be the case with *Margot La Rouge*. In this essay I have tried to show that *Margot* was not merely a frustrated attempt to emulate Mascagni but that there is plenty of original thought in the score. If, by doing this, I have also given deeper insight into both the story and the music of the opera which will add to the enjoyment of any future listener, then my objective will have been achieved.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. It must be remembered that Ravel's arrangement was a piano transcription – not a short score – and was not intended to serve as a guide to the original orchestration but was designed solely for the purpose and needs of a rehearsal pianist. Ravel took great care over this task, often consulting Delius over passages which were not clear. He even advised Delius that, as regards the prelude, a better effect would be obtained if a four-hand (rather than a two-hand) arrangement were made of this section (*Delius – The Paris Years* Lionel Carley: Triad Press 1975). However a compromise seems to have been reached and twenty bars of the prelude appear on a three-stave score.

2. The equivalent passage in the *Idyll* has the following harmonisation:

Example 9A



This seems to suggest that when working on the *Idyll* some revision in the harmony took place. There are quite a few other instances of contradictions between the harmonies of the two scores, but there is always the possibility that they are errors in the lithograph of *Margot La Rouge*.

3. The music of *Margot La Rouge* abounds in triplet figures, but it is probably this one which so worried Beecham when in reference to the opera he said that Delius 'fell back upon the use of a little figure already exploited in *Paris* and worked it almost to death' (*Frederick Delius* p. 122). I hope I have shown that there was a little more thought behind it than Beecham would have us believe.
4. This melody was later incorporated into the *Requiem* (third movement). Apart from (obviously) the *Idyll*, it is the only evidence of anything being 'lifted' from *Margot* and used in another work.
5. The love-duet music was used complete in the *Idyll* and the reader is referred to the study score of this work.
6. The vocal lines in *Margot* are, for the most part, a little angular and it is interesting to compare them with the greater freedom which they assume when Delius completely rethought them many years later for their inclusion in the *Idyll*.
7. 2 2 C.A. 2 2 / 4 2 3 1 / Timpani / Harp / Strings

CONCORDANCE BETWEEN THE VOCAL SCORE OF *MARGOT LA ROUGE* AND THE FULL (STUDY) SCORE OF THE PRELUDE AND IDYLL

MARGOT LA ROUGE
Lithograph Vocal Score
(Levy-Lux, Paris)

IDYLL
Study Score
(Boosey & Hawkes
No 901)

REMARKS
Most of the amendments referred to are found in the British Library copy of *MLR* but some come from other sources.

PRELUDE		PRELUDE	
p.1	bar 1-p.3 bar 25	p.1	bar 1-p.10 bar 7
	SCENE 1		IDIYLL
p.4	bar 1-p.5 bar 3	p.11	bars 1 & 2
p.5	bar 4-p.7 bar 2	p.11	bar 3-p.13 bar 8
p.7	bar 2-p.9 bar 9		
p.9	bar 10-p.10 bar 9	p.14	bar 1-p.16 bar 2
	SCENE 2		
p.10	bar 10-p.11 bar 1	p.16	bar 3-p.25 bar 3
p.11	bar 2-p.13 bar 12		
			p.16 bar 3 of <i>Idyll</i> appears octave higher in <i>MLR</i> .
			p.17 bar 5 of <i>Idyll</i> 1st horn note D flat appears as D natural in <i>MLR</i> .
			p.22 bar 5-p.25 bar 3 of <i>Idyll</i> is in E major but in <i>MLR</i> appears in E flat major (but with a B flat major key sig., the A flats written as accidentals).
p.13 bar 13-p.14 bar 22			

SCENE 3

p.15 bar 1–p.24 bar 7

p.17 bars 8 & 9 of *MLR* have corrections.
 p.23 bar 6-amendment to vocal line.
 p.18 bar 3 – B sharp in harmony does not agree with B natural in vocal line.

SCENE 4

p.24 bar 8–p.29 bar 3
 p.29 bar 4–p.30 bar 2
 p.30 bars 3–9
 p.30 bars 10 & 11
 p.30 bar 12–p.31 bar 4
 p.31 bars 5–10
 p.31 bar 11–p.33 bar 5

p.25 bar 4–p.27 bar 4
 p.27 bars 5 & 6
 p.27 bar 7–p.28 bar 5
 p.64 bar 4–p.67 bar 5

p.28 bar 8—vocal line amendment.

p.33 bar 6–p.37 bar 16

p.32 bar 13 and p.33 bars 1–5 of *MLR* have been completely revised harmonically in order to effect a modulation to C maj. instead of the original E maj. However in the *Idyll* the original harmonies have been retained!
 p.36 bar 11 of *MLR* has alteration – top note of chord D sharp instead of C sharp.

SCENES 5 & 6

p.38 bars 1–10
 p.38 bar 11–p.43 bar 1

p.28 bar 6–p.39 bar 6

p.38 bar 11–p.40 bar 11 of *MLR* are written with key sig. of 4 flats but in the *Idyll* the same bars have key sig. of only 3 flats with the necessary D flats written as accidentals. However, the two scores are not always in agreement as to whether certain harmonies should consist of D natural or D flat.
 p.40 bar 13 of *MLR* has been crossed out but is retained in the *Idyll*.
 p.42 bars 4 & 5 of *MLR* have different harmonies to p.38 bars 3 & 4 of *Idyll*.

p.43 bar 2–p.44 bar 4
 p.44 bar 5–p.45 bar 4

p.39 bar 7–p.41 bar 3

bar 6 of this passage is A flat in *MLR*, A natural in *Idyll*.
 p.45 bar 5 – bass clef in right hand. Although these bars consist of the same melodic content, they are not exact duplications. This is entirely due to the fact that the preceding 23 bars of *MLR* are not used in the *Idyll* and therefore the *Idyll* music has to modulate quickly in order to agree with the key of *MLR* when the two scores again combine.

p.45 bars 5–7
 p.45 bars 8–13

p.41 bars 4–9

p.46 bar 3 of *Idyll*—E bass.
 p.49 bar 1 of *MLR*—B bass.
 In these bars (which is the development of Margot's leitmotiv) the whole bar of *MLR* becomes a half bar in the *Idyll*.

p.45 bar 14–p.47 bar 9
 p.47 bar 10–p.49 bar 2

p.42 bar 1–p.47 bar 2

p.46 bar 3 of *Idyll*—E bass.

p.49 bar 3–p.50 bar 1

p.47 bar 3–p.48 bar 3

p.49 bar 1 of *MLR*—B bass.

p.50 bar 2–p.54 bar 9

p.49 bar 1–p.64 bar 3

In these bars (which is the development of Margot's leitmotiv) the whole bar of *MLR* becomes a half bar in the *Idyll*.
 p.51 bar 5 of *MLR* – the quavers in the bass on the second beat of this bar have been crossed out and indeed have not been used in the *Idyll* where a minim G occupies the bass line of the first half of this bar (see *Idyll* p.53 bar 2). However, the offending B flat D flat quavers have

erroneously found their way into the 2nd bassoon part where they would of course serve little purpose. It is as if they have mistakenly been copied from a full score which did not contain the deletion made in a copy of the vocal score. If this is the case it is proof that the full score of *MLR* was still extant at the time of the Idyll's composition.

p.51 bars 1-9 *MLR* all contain additions to Ravel's piano score and are all duplicated in corresponding bars of the *Idyll*.

SCENE 7
p.55 bar 1-p.69 bar 17

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank the Delius Trust for allowing me to study and quote from the music of *Margot La Rouge*.

CORRECTIONS:

Some Scenes From “The Paris Years” Revisited

by Margaret Bates and Eugene Cronin

The Rue de la Grande Chaumiere is a quiet street; a bit time-forgotten. It opens off the lively Boulevard du Montparnasse just past its intersection with Boulevard Raspail. The street is narrow and lined with tall rather shabby houses. A swaying sign marks the Academie Chaumiere (successor to the Academie Colorossi), and together with two small shops selling artists' materials, books and prints proclaims the street as being in the artists' quarter.

There is a marble-clad new bank on the corner of the street as you turn from the Place Montparnasse, and on the opposite corner a typical Parisian flower shop which spills over onto the pavement with pot plants and palms making a garden on the street. Flower stalls are still one of the lovely free attractions of Paris. Next to it, and facing onto the square is a glass-fronted cafe; obviously the haunt of students and the young.

We walked down to number 8 and were rewarded with the discovery of a time-weathered name board: "Maison Gauguin". The door of the house stood ajar and inside was a dark stone-flagged hall leading across to a door which opened onto a courtyard. The only feature which struck a discordant note was a rack of modern lockers for the residents' post and parcels. Number 8 is still an apartment house.

No concierge appeared, so we went down the stone steps into the yard. Here was a tiny green garden enclosed by high walls, quiet and private, and so evocative of the past. Ivy and creepers flourished. A fig tree grew and a tall acacia had struggled up towards the artists' studios on the top floor and the light which they all needed. Some rebuilding was going on in the basement rooms and a courteous gentleman in blue overalls and beret came to point out the studios which had belonged to Gauguin and Modigliani.

We explained that our interest was in a composer friend of Gauguin's, but alas, he had never heard of Delius! Our guide insisted on taking me to the top floor so that I could photograph the studios and we climbed the slippery black wooden staircase up five flights. A window was opened with some difficulty and gave a splendid view of rooftops and chimney pots such as one's imagination conjured up from songs and stories of Paris. My guide seemed to think I was more interested in Modigliani's studio and urged me to point the camera in that direction. On the way down it was noticeable that nothing inside the house showed signs of change or modernization, including the presence of a loo on each landing.

Madame Charlotte's crèmeerie was more difficult to identify, but what had been a shop front was boarded up and above it was a fading sign denoting an electrician's business. Further down on the same side and facing number 8 the old houses had given way to a new hotel with a North African decor, so perhaps the street is threatened by redevelopment.

The nearby Luxembourg Gardens where Delius and his friends must often have walked and talked were quiet in October. The rows of pleached chestnut trees were turning golden and the ground under them was strewn with conkers. French children do not seem to play with them — at least we never saw any being picked up.

The Rue Cambon is by contrast a busy thoroughfare in the fashionable quarter much frequented by tourists. Here are the couture houses and shops offering in expensive elegance the most exclusive clothes and their accessories. At the far end, if you can tear your eyes away from the shop windows and the traffic, are glimpses of trees in the gardens of the Tuileries. Number 43 where Uncle Theodor had his apartments is still a substantial and elegant mansion, now the headquarters of a banking organisation. There is a benevolent-looking bust in bas-relief over the front entrance which seemed appropriate at least to the former resident in whom we were interested. Facing it across the street is the Ritz Hotel.

The environs of both the Place de l'Opera and the Folies-Bergère are unchanged. The usherettes and waitresses in the Folies were a disappointment dressed in trouser suits, when one was somehow expecting the girl in the bustle of Mante's picture. But the rose-seller at the door of the theatre lent a nostalgic air, and her beautiful face with its enduring yet wistful expression epitomised Montmartre.

Les Halles, like Covent Garden market, has moved out to the suburbs, and the City street cries are no longer heard in the early morning, but Paris of the tone-poem still lives for those willing to exercise a little imagination.

For us there is no hesitation. We shall return for further exploration in Paris and Grez.

Composer's Choice.

A Piano Recital by Robert Threlfall

On 25th October last Midlands Branch chairman Dick Kitching threw open his new Weston Underwood home, near Derby, to members and friends assembled for the opening meeting of the 1980/1 season which was launched in a most auspicious manner by a piano recital given by Robert Threlfall entitled 'Composer's Choice – piano music by composers of whom Delius might have approved'. As Robert explained, although Frederick was a composer who had little enough time to indulge in listening to the music of other composers, it is possible to draw from the various books on his life a number of reported comments which indicate a liking for the music of certain composers as against those he did not, such as Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn. (As an aside it is worth noting that in his formative Leipzig days a string quartet met at his lodgings each Sunday morning with Frederick at the piano and the music of the above mentioned was played on which he at the time commented, 'It is indeed very enjoyable.' Clearly his musical development took him on to new tastes in later life as he stated once to Eric Fenby, 'You needn't ask me to listen to the music of the Immortals. I can't abide 'em. I finished with them long ago!')

The opening item of the recital was Rachmaninov's arrangement of J S Bach's *Preludio in E* which Robert played with great fluency and feeling. The next five pieces came from the pen of Grieg, with whom as we know Delius had a long friendship. *On the Mountains* recalled Frederick's own feelings for the mountains and open spaces, echoing his own pieces *Paa Vidderne (On the heights)*, *The Song of the High Hills* and parts of *A Mass of Life*. This was followed by two Slatter, numbers 5 and 3 dating from 1903, about which Grieg had said his aim had been to 'raise these folk tunes to an artistic level through what may be called conventional harmonisation'. Robert quoted from

Lionel Carley's book *Delius – the Paris years*, recalling an occasion at the Molards when, with Grieg present and whilst discussing music, Maurice Ravel went over to his host's piano and began to play one of Grieg's Norwegian Dances. 'Grieg listened with a smile, but then began to show signs of impatience, suddenly getting up and saying sharply, "No, young man, not like that at all. Much more rhythm. It's a folk dance, a peasant dance. You should see the peasants at home, with the fiddler stamping in time with the music. Play it again!"' And while Ravel played, the little man jumped up and skipped about the room to the astonishment of the company.'

The two final Grieg pieces were *Folksong*, fifth of the 'Lyric Pieces' Book One, dating from 1867, and *Summer Evening* from Book Ten, a title reminiscent of Delius's own piece of the same name. Maurice Ravel was the next composer to be featured as Robert reminded us of Delius's expressed liking for *Daphnis and Chloe*. On a later occasion to the one related above, when both Delius and Ravel were present, the question was raised as to which influences French music was especially indebted. The view was expressed that it was Rameau, Couperin, and Lully, etc., but Delius felt rather differently: 'Nonsense! Modern French music is simply Grieg plus the third act of *Tristan*', to which Ravel replied, 'That is true. We are always unjust to Grieg.' The two Ravel pieces were *A la manière de Borodin* composed in the summer of 1913 and the *Minuet* from the *Sonatina* dating from 1905.

We then heard Delius's *Irmelin Prelude* which, as Robert explained, was not the prelude to the opera of that name but a short composition for small orchestra incorporating four fragments of themes from the opera, dictated to Eric Fenby in 1931, and re-arranged by him for piano. Jelka, in her correspondence, referred to Delius frequently being heard in the music-room at Grez playing fragments of an early opera of which he was clearly very fond, this being *Irmelin*. Chopin featured next in the recital with the *Polonaise No 1* and the famous *Barcarolle*, both brilliantly performed, drawing a full-bodied fluency of tone from the Kitching Bechstein.

After a brief pause 'as required by the musicians' union', Robert launched into the second half of his programme with an exciting virtuoso performance of two Albeniz pieces: *El Albaicín* from the *Iberia* set of 1906-9 and the famous *Tango* in the Godowsky arrangement, prefacing the playing with the comment that Fenby records a definite Delius preference for the music of the Spaniards — Albeniz, Granados and de Falla against that of the Russians, Borodin, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. Robert remarked that Albeniz composed pieces of gradually increasing difficulty until forced to give up playing himself after which he produced pieces of great technical difficulty. On being admonished over this, Albeniz had remarked, 'Nonsense — all that is required is a little practice!'

The music of Enrique Granados was featured next with a performance of his well-known *Danza Triste*, followed by the Rachmaninov arrangement of the *Minuet* from Bizet's *L'Arlesienne* suite. Delius is recorded as remarking that Bizet was the greatest of the French composers and would apparently listen in on the radio to his works — and occasionally to a Strauss waltz which, as Robert

observed, somehow made Frederick seem much more human. At this point he introduced a Tausig arrangement of Strauss's *Election Day* to which he added a 'beginning' and an 'end' culled from a single piece of manuscript which had been shown to Robert while in America by the librarian of the Library of Congress. Clearly in Liszt's hand, although untitled Robert identified it as being for this piece 'perhaps because Liszt thought Tausig's introduction too long or too sudden'.

The programme ended for the benefit of Wagner devotees with *Siegmond's Love Song* arranged by Tausig and *Valhalla* arranged by Brassin, reminding us of the influence on Delius of the works of this maestro which he was able to hear at the Leipzig Opera whilst a student at the Conservatorium there. After a vote of thanks from our host, Dick Kitching, the assembled company gave Robert a warm round of applause following which all repaired to partake of the usual copious quantities of wine and an excellent buffet supper generously provided by Dick and Wyn. We are indeed fortunate in being able to hear a performance by such a distinguished Delian as Robert 'so far North' as our London friends call it. (As a geographical postscript, Derby is in the East Midlands.)

On Thursday October 30th Robert Threlfall repeated the programme at the Holborn Library for the benefit of London members. On this occasion the instrument was a Steinway grand, before an audience of about forty. Interval refreshments were kindly provided by Estelle Palmley and Anne Pinder.

Brian Radford.

Noises off

by John White

No-one could have been more delighted at the appearance of the recording of *The Magic Fountain* than I and amongst the sympathetic reviews I would single out that by 'MM' in the August 'Gramophone'. Whilst agreeing with nearly everything he has to say I cannot join him (and other commentators) in admiring the 'natural sounds of sea, of shore, or of tropical forest gradually faded out as the music takes over'.

Just as one piece of music — or extract — can mean different things to different people, so natural sounds will also arouse memories and associations which will be unique to the individual and their use can be objectionable both because they have not been specified by the composer and because they may be misleading or even unwelcome to the listener. To take an example from the beginning of the opera: the gentle sound of the water slapping against the hull of the becalmed ship revived in my mind the bubbling noise made by the chemical apparatus in the Alec Guinness film *The Man in the White Suit*. Nothing inappropriate happened in the storm, later in Act 1, but here I have a different objection. I was lucky enough to be present at the radio recording session and so heard nothing but the music on that occasion, the sound effects having been

added later. Musical storms tend to be rather disappointing affairs (I except the storm in *Tapiola*) but this was not: it sounded thrilling and certainly not in need of a little help from Mother Nature. There is, in any case, a fundamental misunderstanding here: music does not emulate natural sounds, it provides a 'simile', in its own language, which will produce in the mind of the listener a reaction equivalent to that produced by the original. The effect of the opening of Act 1 of *The Valkyrie* is psychological; we do not reach out for our umbrellas. To return to *The Magic Fountain* there is the further objection that the natural storm very nearly eclipses the musical one so that more than just the ship is destroyed.

Matters improve as Solano is washed up on the beach and, mercifully, there are no seagulls added to the sound of the surf, otherwise one could imagine not Watawa, but Roy Plomley, emerging from the jungle with eight records and a bound copy of the 'Complete Voyages of Christopher Columbus'. And from here onwards all is well until Watawa and Solano set out for the magic fountain in Act III. Not that I object to the enchanting sounds of these particular birds who would, no doubt, delight M. Messiaen (his own 'Oiseaux Exotiques', on the other hand, occasionally sound to me as though they had alighted on a piece of barbed wire, or were in the act of digesting a particularly muscular worm). Delius's orchestra has its bird sounds too, and it is a pity, once again, to superimpose the literal on the poetic.

Finally, we reach the fountain, and it was a considerable relief to me to hear, on the recording, sounds truly suggestive of a fountain. When I heard the radio broadcast, the sound was that of a high velocity hose-pipe so that one could imagine an alternative ending: the chorus of spirits replaced by a chorus of firemen (the parts transcribed down an octave, of course) and the lovers dying in a final conflagration. (The fact that this has nothing to do with the story would not deter some of our producers.) The opera ends, not with a bang but a gurgle.

The addition of natural sounds to music has endless possibilities. It would be an added fillip, in the interests of authenticity, to relay the sounds 'live' from outside the concert hall. Who could resist *Jardins sous la pluie* aided by a genuine downpour in St. James's Park, or *Les Jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este* combined with les jeux d'eaux a Trafalgar Square?

Absolute realism might impose insuperable problems, however. A performance of Strauss' *Don Quixote* with real sheep would require the presence of sheep-dogs and the shepherd to prevent them from becoming entangled with the orchestra, and the hosing down of the concert platform after the performance would be an additional expense. The conductor, however, might find them less difficult to organise than his players.

As long as sounds can be aurally disentangled from music there is no great harm done, it has to be admitted. But what of Mr. X, the celebrated contemporary composer: how would we know where the noise ended and the music began?

(Diana McVeagh, reviewing *The Magic Fountain* in the first issue of *Performance*, is of a similar opinion. To her the fountain's flow in the last act 'sounds like nothing so much as the automatic flush of a gent's loo!' She asks, 'Isn't it insulting to Delius's skill and the listeners' imaginations to impose effects at all? If the opera is worth playing, then why not trust it.' — Ed.)

Forthcoming Events

February 1st Darmstadt

First night of a new production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* with fourteen performances planned until April. No advance details of soloists or conductor.

February 5th at 8 p.m. and 15th at 2 p.m. Zurich

Last two performances this season of the current production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras. Details of previous performances listed in October Journal. Further performances announced for next season.

February 24th at 7 p.m. British Music Information Centre, London

'The new Delius recordings' — Delius Society talk given by Lyndon Jenkins.

February 27th at 7.30 p.m. Town Hall, Huddersfield

Vernon Handley conducts the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra in a concert of British music: Howell's Concerto for string orchestra, Delius's Cello Concerto (soloist Julian Lloyd Webber), and Walton's First Symphony.

March 2nd at 7.45 p.m. QEH, London

Three of Delius's early part-songs (RT IV/I/3, 5 & 6) sung by the ILEA Cockpit Youth Choir, conductor Peter Collis, in the English version by Lionel Carley.

March 10th at 6.15 p.m. Waterloo Room, RFH, London

Sir Charles Mackerras (conductor of the Zurich *Village Romeo*) talking to our Vice President Felix Aprahamian about his life and career, with recorded musical examples. Tickets £2.

March 25th at 7 p.m. BMIC, London

'Gerald Finzi and his contemporaries' — Delius Society talk given by Dr Michael Salmon to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of Finzi's death.

March 28th at 8 p.m. 'Ravensdale', Weston Underwood, Derby

A Midlands Branch meeting at which Barrie Iliffe (Head of Music at the British Council and former manager of the New Philharmonia Orchestra) will talk on Delius's *Eventyr*, a lecture which he has already delivered to London members.

March 30th — April 3rd BBC Radio Three

Delius is 'This Week's Composer'.

April 4th at 8 p.m. St Albans Cathedral

Delius's *Sea Drift* (soloist Stephen Varcoe) and *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* with Britten's *Spring Symphony*. The St Albans Bach Choir and the Hatfield Philharmonic Orchestra are conducted by Stephen Darlington. Admission by programme: £4, £3, £2, £1.

April 11th at 7.45 p.m. Civic Hall, Guildford

Vernon Handley conducts the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra in Delius's Violin Concerto (soloist Hugh Bean), and works by Ravel and Rachmaninov.

April 28th at 7 p.m. BMIC, London

'A Postcard from Spain – a look at Symbolism and Impressionism in Debussy' – a Delius Society talk given by Derek Cox.

May 2nd Derby

A Midlands Branch meeting at which Lyndon Jenkins will repeat his London talk on recent Delius recordings. Venue to be arranged.

May 3rd Philadelphia, USA

Delius Society Philadelphia Branch AGM and Dinner, with an all-Finzi commemorative concert.

May 10th RFH, London

Norman del Mar conducts Delius's *Paris*. Confirmation and further details not available at present.

May 24th at 7.30 p.m. RFH, London

Delius's *First Cuckoo* and *Summer Night on the River*. Sir Charles Groves conducts the RPO, with works by Elgar and Tchaikovsky.

June 6th at 3 p.m. Mary Ward House, 5 Tavistock Place, London

Delius Society AGM. The Annual Dinner will be held at the Bloomsbury Centre Hotel, Coram Street, Russell Square. Further details will be circulated with the next issue of the Journal.

Readers are referred to the October Journal for notice of other concerts containing works by Delius on March 24th, April 5th and April 22nd. Members may also like to make a note of proposed Society talks in London at the BMIC on September 15, October 21 and November 26 when the possible subjects will be E J Moeran, Grieg and A E Housman. The BMIC is at 10 Stratford Place (01-499 8567), opposite Bond Street Underground Station. Further details of Society activities may be obtained from the Programme Secretary – Derek Cox, Highfield, Deanland Road, Balcombe, Sussex RH17 6LX (0444-83294).

The three Delius Society volumes totalling 21 78 rpm records with Sir Thomas Beecham conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra are being offered for sale (the LP transfers are in SHB32). Anyone interested in purchasing the originals should contact Bob Briggs, 37 Colvestone Crescent, Dalston, London E8.

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